

# Abroad

## Kampala

## Tragedy (Cont'd)

It is four years since the overthrow of the sanguinary tyrant Idi Amin as ruler of Uganda, but peace and public safety have not returned to this strife-torn country. Idi Amin's rival and successor, Colonel Milton Obote, has continued to preside over a tumultuous environment in a largely tribal context. On one side is the powerful though famously undisciplined Uganda army, pitted against various regional rebel movements, the biggest of which is the full-fledged guerrilla National Resistance Army. The most recent incident, brought to public attention by a courageous church newspaper, was the slaughter of two hundred civilians, mostly women and adolescents, at a camp at Kikyusa by men who seem unquestionably to have been government troops in official uniform. The two hundred were among 100,000 civilians rounded up by the government and put in resettlement camps as part of a drive against the guerrillas. The opposition claims that two hundred more civilians have died in the last months in "accidents," often meaning they were bound hand and foot and left to die in the jungle. Almost no charges have ever been filed against any of those detained. The government ascribed the killings to "bandits," meaning members of the National Resistance Army.

## Seville

## Two in '92

It is only nine years away from one of the rip-roaringest occasions of the century, namely the five-hundredth anniversary of Columbus's discovery of America, and none too soon to begin work. Consequently, the Bureau of International Expositions in Paris, which has such anniversaries in its keeping, has named two cities to share the celebrations of the discovery, Chicago and Seville. Chicago was the seat of the great Columbian fair of 1892 and is a natural choice for the repeat. Seville was the center of the entire web of the Indies, the seat of administration of the Spanish American empire, and is still the home of its fabled archives. It was in Seville, moreover, that King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella formally commissioned the voyage of the Genoese navigator and sent him on his way with their blessing and their provisions. This Andalusian capital does not expect to be able to create anything like the spectacles awaited in Chicago, where preliminary calculations estimate the attendance of 65 million tourists. Seville modestly hopes for 25 million. Just in case time seems to hang heavy between now and then, the Expositions Bureau gave Paris permission to celebrate the two-hundredth anniversary of the French Revolution between April and October 1989.

## London

## Waning Reds

One of the minor casualties of the strong showing made by Mrs. Thatcher's Conservatives in the recent elections has been the British Communist Party. This small but vocal remnant of the once-powerful British Marxist movement has declined in numbers by several thousand in the last two years, and membership is now at a scant 15,000. The main erosion has come from a struggle between "modern" Euro-

communists and the old guard trained in the Stalin era. The fighting centers on control of the party newspaper, the *Morning Star*, although the real issue is the survival of the party itself. The fact is that today's left-wing British youth, if they are interested in politics at all, are attracted to the Labour Party. "Mass unemployment has had the opposite effect of what we predicted," said one veteran Communist sourly. Party membership hit a high of 56,000 in the late 1940s, and has fallen steadily ever since. The last Communist seat in Parliament was lost in 1945.

## Rome

## Ghost Train

The *wagons-lits* train from Milan, a luxury all-sleeping-car express, arrived here shortly before 8 A.M. the other day—totally empty of passengers. No one could at first explain the mystery of this "ghost train." What had happened was that shortly before the train was due to leave Milan, striking porters locked every sleeping-car compartment door and then disembarked and disappeared. The passengers, their tickets and reservations all in order, were left to rattle the compartment doors in vain and then return, fuming, with their luggage, to the station platform just before the train moved off. In a state of violent frustration, some of the passengers vainly tried to stop later trains from leaving by standing in front of the locomotive. By midnight, the station was completely quiet; the strike was over.

## Bristol

## ... Aft not Agley

Britain's smallest mammal is the harvest mouse. It is only two and a half inches long and weighs one-quarter of an ounce. It was supposedly doomed when the giant harvesting combines with their ground-grazing blades were introduced some years ago, for the harvest mouse builds its round nests of dry grass attached to the tops of wheat stalks. What happened, according to Dr. Stephen Harris of the zoology department of Bristol University, is that the mouse learned to interpret the vibrations felt through the crops as the combine approached. The mouse discovered that if it dropped to the ground and huddled in the right place, the main body of the machine would pass over it harmlessly and the great blades could not touch it. It also learned to avoid the insecticide sprays in British farmlands by frequently moving its nests to plantations of weeds on nearby hillsides or railroad embankments.



Duncan, *Punch*

Rothco

"One is so grateful one is biodegradable. One quite simply couldn't live with oneself otherwise."